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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News
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MN970512: New Force Master Chief Announced
Washington -- Vice Admiral Harold M. Koenig, Surgeon General of the Navy, announced that HMCM(SW) Mark Weldon has been selected to be the next Force Master Chief and Director of the Medical Department Enlisted Personnel. Master Chief Weldon is currently serving as the Command Master Chief of Naval Station Mayport, FL. He will report to Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in late March and relieve HMCM(SS) Michael Stewart on June 17, 1998.

Master Chief Weldon was selected from a field of highly qualified professional Master Chief candidates including: HMCM(SS) Larry Bailey from Roosevelt roads; HMCM(SW) Bob Bayerlien from Portsmouth; HMCM(SW) Jackie Brown from NEHC; HMCM (FMF) Mark Cook from Rota, Spain; HMCM(AW) Paul Orr from 3rd Marine Division Okinawa; and HMCM(SW) Mike Smith from Portsmouth.

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MN970513: Naval Hospital Charleston Is Doing More With Less
CHARLESTON, SC -- Naval Hospital (NH) Charleston is taking innovative approaches to problems by "doing more with less."

NH Charleston is working closely with the local civilian hospital, Trident Medical Center, to enhance medical skills and opportunities for the medical staff.

The Navy doctors have obtained state licenses which permit them to practice in a specified civilian hospital, Trident Medical Center.

Under this new partnering, Navy doctors now provide obstetrics and lithothripsy (a procedure within urinary systems or the gallbladder), services. They will also be able to conduct

several other low volume and higher risk surgical procedures that NH Charleston could no longer support.

Innovative ways to do orthopedic surgery cases have also been found. For example, if an orthopedic case is sent to National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, MD, the orthopedic surgeon can accompany and perform the surgery.

Partnering with other organizations isn't entirely new to NH Charleston. The mental health providers from NH Charleston have had privileges at the local veterans affairs hospital to care for active duty patients for some time now.

NH Charleston's ingenuity not only benefits its customers but the staff as well by helping them to maintain their skills through partnering.

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MN970514: Fighting Back One Woman At A Time

CORPUS CHRISTI, TX - Naval Hospital (NH) Corpus Christi uses a mobile mammography unit to take health care to the deckplates.

Utilizing funds made available by the National Defense Appropriations Act of FY 1997, the hospital contracted radiology services from a mobile mammography unit and sent it to South Texas to provide services for eligible women: active duty, retirees and family members. Within six days the unit conducted 263 mammograms for active duty and retired women at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Naval Air Station Kingsville, and Naval Station Ingleside.

During mobile unit visits, all of the women received a mammogram and were educated on how to perform monthly breast self exams. The importance of the need to have a yearly clinical breast exam by their primary care provider was stressed. Feedback from the women served was overwhelmingly positive.

Fourteen women required additional care based on the results of their screening mammogram in the mobile unit. Of these women, one was diagnosed with breast cancer in its early stages. She stated that had it not been for the mobile mammography unit she would have skipped her yearly mammogram.

The use of the mobile unit was part of NH Corpus Christi's 1997 breast cancer initiative and truly reflects its effort to fight breast cancer one woman at a time.

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MN970515: Clinic's Customer Service Keeps Employees Fit At Shipyard

Potential employees of Puget Sound Naval Shipyard must prove they are physically fit to be considered for the job.

To determine physical fitness they are required to undergo a pre-employment physical at Naval Hospital, Bremerton Branch Medical Clinic.

According to CDR James Brooks, MC, the clinic's officer-in-charge, the pre-employment physicals have been fine tuned to meet the job requirements and the volume of potential employees.

"There was a backlog of almost 2,000 exams when I arrived, taking up to four hours per patient," said Brooks. "We changed our methods of customer service and within the first three months we combated the back-log. And we now see about 80 patients a day."

Once that process was improved the focus turned to the quality of the examinations performed by the physicians. "What they were doing wasn't wrong because they were giving complete physicals,

but I wanted to incorporate job capability into their physicals," said Brooks.

The only way to make that happen was for the clinic to know what position the potential employee was applying for and what hazards are associated with that job. This is determined before the patient walks through the door for an exam.

"This method of practice saves time and money because we know what limitations to test for and what is expected of each individual," said Brooks. "Every exam is specific to the job requirement. Pre-employment physicals are only a small portion of this multi-faceted clinic, but before the process was improved, the amount of money being paid out in job compensation was going up about half-a-million annually. In the past two years, the amount has steadily decreased," said Brooks.

BY JO2 Christopher McClendon, Naval Hospital, Bremerton

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MN970516: Roosevelt Roads Takes Frames Of Choice To The Deckplate

The frames of choice eyeglass initiative has done remarkably well in the Navy community on the island paradise of Puerto Rico. In four months, U.S. Naval Hospital Roosevelt Roads has implemented the frames of choice eyeglass initiative to 32 assorted naval station departments and tenant commands.

There were 589 eye exams performed and 1,242 pairs of eyeglasses ordered right from the patients' work location. The naval hospital team performed this service by traveling to the many work centers on the naval station. This translates into 671 hours (84 workdays) that sailors were able to stay on the job instead of traveling to the naval hospital.

The ophthalmology department has taken care of all but one command in such a small amount of time. The sole remaining customer is the branch medical clinic located on Vieques. The island of Vieques is located approximately seven miles off the coast of Puerto Rico and is the home of the naval ammunition support depot. It is world renowned as the Atlantic fleet's live-impact range and also boasts some of Puerto Rico's most beautiful beaches. In mid-December CDR Dan Elizondo, MC, and LT Luis Perez, MSC, accompanied by their six member staff, will travel to Vieques to complete the deckplate portion of the frames of choice initiative. In addition, they will enjoy a well deserved half day at the beach.

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MN970517: Composite Health Care Comes To Deckplates

Computers aboard ships are nothing new. But the composite health care system (CHCS) for shipboard units in the Mayport, FL area is.

In keeping with the Navy Surgeon General's policy of making Navy Medicine easier to access, the Information Resource Management Department (IRMD) of Naval Hospital (NH) Jacksonville and Regional Support Group (RSG) Mayport's medical department have joined forces to bring CHCS to shipboard units in the Mayport, FL basin. This is a prime example of Navy Medicine working as a team to move into the 21st Century.

CHCS is the computer system used by Navy Medicine that allows providers to directly enter orders for patient pharmacy, laboratory, radiology, and specialty services. This system allows the senior

medical department representative to perform in minutes what once took days to accomplish.

Previously, the shipboard independent duty corpsman (IDC) had to write out the orders by hand. The orders were then hand-carried to clinic personnel for entry into the computer system. The shipboard IDC can now access the system without having to leave the ship. Additionally, CHCS gives the IDC e-mail access to medical officers at RSG, branch medical clinic and naval hospital to answer questions concerning the care of patients. Eight ships have been brought on-line: the goal is to have all Mayport ships on-line with CHCS by the first of the year. Deployed units will be outfitted with the system as they return to port.

In October, Vern Smith, NH Jacksonville information systems security manager contacted RSG medical staff about the feasibility for such a project. The hospital provides modem, monitor and keyboard at no cost to the ships. The ships have only to provide access to an outside line.

On November. 7, the first installation took place on board USS SCOTT (DDG-995). Senior Chief William Abberton, ship's senior medical department representative, said "This is an incredibly valuable tool for me. It enables me to consult with the specialty clinic, verify crewmembers' appointments, and order and review lab and x-ray results directly from the ship. It is an outstanding time saver for the crew and decreases the IDC's time away from the ship." Courtesy Of The Mirror, Naval Station Mayport, FL

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MN970518: Public Has Access To JCAHO Quality Check

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO) has provided a complete directory of all accredited organizations. This new Internet directory called "quality check" is available on the JCAHO web site. The address is <http://www.jcaho.org>.

The directory includes the accredited organization's name, address, phone number, accreditation decision based on the most recent triennial survey, accreditation date, current accreditation status, and effective date.

Quality check is intended to provide the public with access to information about the accreditation status of health care institutions in areas such as patient rights, infection control, and many other areas of interest and organization's performance report.

In 1998, JCAHO plan to provide links between quality check and the accredited organizations.

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MN970519: TRICARE Q & A

QUESTION: My primary care manager ordered blood tests and an x-ray which I had the next day. Because it was a civilian outpatient visit on a different day than my appointment, an additional copayment was required of me. Is there any way I can avoid paying the additional copayment?

ANSWER: One possible way to avoid these separate copayments is to check with your military treatment facility (MTF) to see if services such as x-rays and lab tests can be provided. Because of limited resources, not all MTFs can provide these services.

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MN970520: HEALTHWATCH: Positively Approaching The New Year

As the new year approaches and your thoughts turn to New Year's resolutions, start 1998 optimistically. To achieve your dreams for the New Year, remember these ABC's for a healthy lifestyle.

- A - avoid negative sources, people, places, things, and habits.
 - B - believe in yourself.
 - C - consider things from every angle.
 - D - don't give up and don't give in.
 - E - enjoy life today--yesterday is gone; tomorrow may never come.
 - F - family and friends are hidden treasures--seek them and enjoy their riches.
 - G - give more than you planned to.
 - H - hang on to your dreams.
 - I - ignore those who try to discourage you.
 - J - just do it.
 - K - keep trying no matter how hard it seems; it will get easier.
 - L - love yourself.
 - M - make it happen.
 - N - never lie, cheat, steal; always strike a fair deal.
 - O - open your eyes and see things as they really are.
 - P - practice makes perfect.
 - Q - quitters never win and winners never quit.
 - R - read, study, and learn about everything important in your life.
 - S - stop procrastinating.
 - T - take control of your own destiny.
 - U - understand yourself in order to better understand others.
 - V - visualize it.
 - W - want it more than anything.
 - X - xcellerate your efforts.
 - Y - you are unique of all god's creations; nothing can replace you.
 - Z - zero in on your target and go for it.
- Courtesy Of Day Dream, Inc.

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Editors Note: Due to the holiday season, the next issue of MEDNEWS will be out on January 8, 1998.

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail <mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil>, telephone 202/762-3218 (DSN 762-3218), or fax 202/762-3224.